

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Nancy Baker, Communications Director, +1 540-533-7490, nbaker@inmed.org



Climate-vulnerable communities in Jamaica get a boost

CLARENDON, JAMAICA (March 6, 2020): In an official handover ceremony yesterday in the Alston District of Clarendon, Jamaica, five communities became the proud owners of INMED Aquaponics™ systems.

The systems were made possible by the Government's Adaptation Programme and Financing Mechanism (AP&FM) project, part of the Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience (PPCR) with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), to reduce Jamaica's vulnerability to climate change. The island is experiencing increasingly destructive impacts, such as stronger hurricanes, severe flooding, prolonged droughts and sea level rise, which have led to food insecurity, unemployment and growing poverty. Between 2001 and 2012, Jamaica experienced 11 storm events (including five major hurricanes) and several flood events amounting to roughly J\$128.54 billion in loss and damage.

INMED Partnerships for Children has helped dozens of vulnerable communities around the world, including many in Jamaica, to strengthen their climate resilience, food security and income-generation opportunities through INMED Aquaponics™. The international nonprofit humanitarian development organization and its Jamaica-based affiliate, INMED Caribbean, have been building pathways for Jamaica's most vulnerable children, families and communities to achieve well-being and self-reliance for nearly two decades.

“Jamaica is an example for the world in building resilience to the effects of climate change, and aquaponic farming is a crucial part of this effort. By building these aquaponics systems we have provided an important first step, but it is these local communities in Clarendon who have the will – and now the tools – to build a brighter, climate-resilient future for themselves and future generations,” said INMED Founder and CEO Dr. Linda Pfeiffer at the hand-over event. “We are committed to provide crucial training and mentoring to help them be successful in achieving food and economic security and building climate resiliency.”

Aquaponics is an ancient food production technique used by the Aztecs that combines aquaculture (fish farming) with hydroponics (soilless crop production in water) in a closed symbiotic system. Advantages of aquaponics include crop production at least 10 times higher than traditionally farmed plots of equivalent size, up to 90% less water consumption than traditional irrigation, low energy consumption, year-round production of high-quality crops, no chemical pesticides or fertilizers, and flood and drought resilience.

INMED’s modular system can be adapted to fit any space in urban and rural environments. It also can be constructed of local materials and equipped with solar power and rainwater harvesting features for additional cost savings. Combined with access to training, financing, markets, ongoing technical support from INMED-trained agriculture extension agents and other value chain opportunities, this climate-smart farming technology is considered a critical, sustainable strategy for reducing poverty.

In 2017, INMED Caribbean implemented the Increasing Access to Climate-Smart Agriculture (IACA) program in partnership with the Government of Jamaica, IDB Lab, Caribbean Development Bank, the College of Agriculture, Science and Education (CASE) and others to help smallholder farmers and emerging entrepreneurs launch aquaponics enterprises. This groundbreaking program provides technical and business training (online and hands-on), access to financing, links to markets and ongoing technical support from RADA extension agents to cover the entire value chain for success. Over a hundred emerging agro-entrepreneurs have participated in the program so far.

“This [aquaponics] system is the first of its kind in our community,” said a James Hill farmer, who has been engaged in the project since its inception last year. “We are thankful for this gift and will take good care of it.” The INMED systems provided by the AP&FM at James Hill and Alston, as well as those at Aenon Town, John’s Hall and Ritchies, will be operated by the Community Development Committees, working together with support by the Social Development Commission, to operate and build successful climate-smart agriculture enterprises and improve livelihoods.

About INMED

INMED Caribbean is a registered Jamaican nonprofit and an in-country affiliate of US-based INMED Partnerships for Children, an international nonprofit humanitarian development organization that has transformed the lives of millions of children and their family and

community members in 100 countries since 1986. Since 2002, INMED's work in Jamaica has focused on improving the health, education, safety and opportunities of the nation's most vulnerable citizens through climate-smart agriculture, school gardening, climate-change adaptation, nutrition education, positive youth development and teacher training programs.

In partnership with multilateral investment banks and the Government of Jamaica, INMED is currently leading initiatives to help small-scale farmers, women and youth start aquaponics enterprises in Jamaica to improve food security, income-generating opportunities and climate change adaptation. For more information about INMED's work in Jamaica, visit <https://inmed.org/caribbean>.

-End-